

Students, parents tour new Fremont Middle School

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FREMONT -- Eighth-grade students and their parents got an up-close look at the new Fremont Middle School on Thursday evening, as the school district continued to prepare for the school's first day of classes Thursday with an opportunity for visitors to tour the building.



Principal Anthony Walker greeted parents and students Thursday and walked through basic things to know about the new 126,000-square-foot building before letting everyone go on their own self-guided tours.

"One of the things we're saying to students is we want to keep this nice. This is a gift from the community," Walker said.

The \$25 million facility is being paid for through a 2008 bond issue and Ohio School Facilities Commission funding.

The three-story building includes SMART Boards in every classroom and 24 iPads that will be used in the Media Center and classrooms throughout the building.

Fremont City Schools held a dedication ceremony for the new building Dec. 15, and the school's sixth- and seventh-grade students and their parents had already conducted their own orientation sessions and tours prior to Thursday.

Jordan Hershey showed her parents her locker on the building's first floor, as the eighth-grade student talked about the school's new features.

"It's fine. I can still fit everything in it," Hershey said of her new locker, as she tried the combination.

Hershey's father, Rob, said he liked the school's layout.

"The technology is going to be really useful. This was well thought-out. Well designed," he said.

In another section of the first floor, eighth-grade student Selena Mata organized her locker space and started putting books and folders away. She said she particularly liked the choir room.

"It's bigger and the seats are better," she said.

Tuesday night, seventh-grader Brett Bartson called the building breathtaking and said he was also a fan of the choir room, which is in the performing arts music wing.

As she stood by the door to her new classroom, eighth-grade math teacher Rachel Gangwer said she loved the new building and noted that students previously apprehensive about the move were more receptive once they got to see the inside of the middle school.

"It has all the technology we could ever want," Gangwer said. "The kids are very close together."

Gangwer said she did not have a SMART Board in her classroom at the old FMS building and had been trained on how to use one in the classroom.

Walker said there had been a lot of parents between the three grades, especially the sixth grade, that had toured the facility in the past week.

"They love it. They're amazed at how huge it is. It's clean. It's bright. They like all the opportunities their students will have," he said